

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

CU-04 OMB-01 AID-20 L-03 DRC-01 /115 W

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P 280938Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1284

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 7982

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR KS JA

SUBJECT: KOREAN CHRISTIAN ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTEST

REF: SEOUL 7806

1. IN PAST WEEK CHRISTIAN ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTEST ACTIVITIES ON PART CHRISTIAN GROUPS HAVE INTENSIFIED (REFTEL) FOCUS FOR THESE ACTIVITIES IS APPARENTLY CENTERED IN NATONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES (NCCC).

2. ON NOVEMBER 27, NCCC SUPPORTED PROTEST MEETING ORGANIZED BY CHRISTIAN STUDENTS TOOK PLACE AT SEMUNAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ON OCCASION OF ANNUAL UNDERWOOD MEMORIAL LECTURE. ACCORDING NCCC SOURCE, CHURCH PASTOR KANG SHIM YANG LED STUDENTS IN PRAYER AND LECTURE WAS QUICKLY TURNED INTO ANTI-GOVERNMENT MEETING. AFTERWARDS SOME FORTH STUDENTS MARCHED OUT OF CHURCH, WERE BLOCKED BY POLICE AT NEARBY KWANGHWAMUN INTERSECTION WHERE TWENTY TWO WERE ARRESTED. FOUR GIRLS WERE RELEASED SAME EVENING AND MOST, IF NOT ALL OF THE REST, THE FOLLOWING MORNING.

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3. ON MORNING OF NOVEMBER 28, PROTEST PRAYER MEETING UNDER NCCC AUSPICES WAS HELD IN LOBBY OF CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING BUILDING WHICH ALSO HOUSES NCCC HEADQUARTERS. MEETING OF SOME THIRTY FIVE TO FORTY PEOPLE WAS LED BY PAE MYUNG JUN, NCCC CHAIRMAN. METHODIST, PRESBYTERIAN, EPISCOPALIAN, PENTECOSTAL MINISTERS AND SALVATION ARMY LEADERS REPORTEDLY PARTICIPATED. THEY WERE JOINED BY TWENTY STUDENTS CARRYING PROTEST BANNERS AND WEARING SASHES WITH ANTI-GOVERNMENT SLOGANS. WHEN STUDENTS WALKED OUT IN STREE TO CONTINUE PROTEST THEY WERE ARRESTED BY POLICE AND TAKEN AWAY IN TWO POLICE VANS.

4. CHRISTAIN SOURCES STATE THAT THERE WERE SEVERAL OTHER UNPUBLICIZED STUDENT AND CHURCH DEMONSTRATIONS SUPPORTED BY NCCC DURING PAST WEEK AS WELL AS SUCCESSFUL CHURCH-LED HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE ON NOVEMBER 23-24. (BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY).

5. ON NOVEMBER 28, REV. KIM KWON SUK, NCCC GENERAL SECRETARY TOLD EMBOFF THAT NCCC WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND PROTEST PRAYER MEETINGS TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON GOVERNMENT FOR POLITICAL CHANGE. MOREOVER, NCCC AND CHURCH LEADERS WOULD MAKE AVAILABLE CHURCH BUILDINGS THROUGHOUT SEOUL TO STUDENTS TO ENABLE THEM TO MEET AND CONTINUE PROTESTS WHEN UNIVERSITIES ARE CLOSED.

6. KIM ALSO SAID HE HAD RECENT MEETING WITH ROK-CIA DEPUTY DIRECTOR KIM CHI YOL. ACCORDING TO KIM DEPUTY CIA DIRECTOR INDICATED THAT ROKG WANTS TO IMPROVE RELATONS WITH CHURCH LEADERS, INTELLECTUALS, AND STUDENTS AND DOES NOT WANT TO CREATE IMPRISONED "MARTYRS". THE CIA OFFICIAL "PROMISED" THAT THE ROKG GENUINELY WANTED TO CHANGE ITS IMAGE BY MINIMIZING POLICE SURVEILLANCE AND OTHER FORMS OF CONTROLS. HE ASSURED REV. KIM THAT ROK-CIA WOULD CEASE CHURCH SURVEILLANCE AND ASKED, IN CONFIDENTIAL

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RETURN, FOR CLOSER CHURCH-STATE COOPERATION. DEPUTY CIA DIRECTOR HINTED AT FURTHER "CHANGES"

IN GOVERNMENT POSITION IN NEAR FUTURE.

7. REV. KIM SAID HE REPLIED THAT MERE COSMETIC CHANGE NOT SUFFICIENT AND THAT ONLY CHAGING OF YUSHIN CONSTITUTION COULD BRING

ABOUT GENUINE CHURCH-STATE RAPPROCHEMENT.
HOWEVER, KIM SAID NCCC HAS AGREED TO SEPARATE
MEETINGS OF CHURCH LEADERS WITH LEADING
ROK-CIA OFFICIALS AND WITH LEADERS
OF DRP EARLY IN DECEMBER TO DISCUSS CHURCH
RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT. KIM SAID CHURCH
LEADERS ARE AWARE THAT SOME LIBERALIZING
ROK POLICY CHANGES ARE IN THE WIND AND
ATTRIBUTE THIS TO SECRETARY KISSINGER'S VISIT.
HOWEVER, KIM WAS EXPLICIT IN NOTING THAT CHURCH LEADERS
CONTINUE TO DISTRUST PRESIDENT PARK
AND HIS GOVERNMENT.
UNDERHILL

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